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ABSTRACT

At regional state universities, teacher education is usually a university-wide endeavor. The majority of American public school teachers are prepared at regional state universities. This paper describes a successful, low-cost follow-up study model at a regional state university, Kutztown University (Pennsylvania) Since 1952, the university has conducted a regular follow-up study of recent graduates to ascertain their success as beginning teachers. Research indicates their graduates are generally pleased with their academic experiences at Kutztown University. The paper also describes the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP), a state-wide first-year teacher internship program at Morehead State University. KTIP is a research-based system of observation and evaluation which identifies effective and ineffective teaching behaviors. Based on the commitment to continuing development of teachers through training and support, the internship year bridges the gap between teacher preparation and on-site teaching. KTIP consists of a full year of classroom teaching for which the intern has complete responsibility. It provides immediate, ongoing feedback to the institution from which the intern graduates. Nine recommendations for conducting follow-up studies at regional state universities with implications for small private liberal arts colleges are offered. (SM)

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Follow-up Studies at Regional State Universities

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Symposium

Evaluation and Follow-up Studies Make a Difference in Teacher Education

Annual Meeting of the
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
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Overview

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as well as respective state departments of education require that there be a "systematic" procedure for evaluating teacher education graduates and teacher education programs and that the procedures be an integral component in teacher education degree and certification programs at the undergraduate (initial certification), graduate, and post-baccalaureate levels. Follow-up studies assist teacher educators in their efforts to continuously improve programs in accordance with accreditation agency standards. Above all, it affords teacher educators with the opportunity of determining needs in terms of course, program, and degree requirements. Follow-up studies represent only one important dimension in program evaluation but as a result of follow-up studies changes can be implemented. During times of financial crisis as higher education is now experiencing, follow-up studies can often be used to determine appropriate cost-effective measures as well as provide a comprehensive overview of program effectiveness. There are many by-products of successful follow-up studies.

The instruments used and the format and procedures followed in administering follow-up surveys should be based upon the latest research findings related to follow-up studies of education degree graduates and successful post-baccalaureate teacher certification participants seeking initial certification or extending a valid certificate to include an additional field of certification.

At regional state universities, teacher education is usually a university-wide endeavor even though a particular academic unit has been designated the primary teacher education unit (college, division, department). Historically speaking, most regional state universities can trace their roots back to the days of the normal school or state teachers college status. Most regional state universities identify teacher education with service to the public schools as a major or important institutional mission. The majority of public school teachers in the United States are prepared at regional state universities or colleges.

The purpose of this paper is three fold: First, to describe a successful and low-cost follow-up study model at a regional state university (Kutztown University of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education; secondly, to describe a state-wide first year teacher internship program (Kentucky Teacher Internship Program) with implications for teacher education program assessment; and thirdly, to provide recommendations for conducting follow-up studies at regional state universities with implications for small private liberal arts colleges.

Kutztown University Graduate Degree and Post-Baccalaureate Certification Program Follow-up Model

Purpose

Since 1952 Kutztown University (formerly Kutztown State College) has conducted a regular follow-up of its recent graduates to ascertain the degree of success which the graduates have experienced as beginning teachers. From the 1953-54 academic year through the 1983-84 academic year, the studies included the graduates of the previous two years. But since 1984-85, an annual follow-up survey has been conducted of all graduates from Kutztown University including graduate education degree recipients. The studies have been conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Strategic Planning. A supplementary follow-up survey has been conducted of graduates currently teaching by asking their administrators (superintendent, principal, supervisor) to evaluate the graduate's teaching

performance. This supplementary follow-up study has been conducted by the College of Education and distributed throughout the university community to administrators and faculty involved in various undergraduate and graduate education degree and/or post-baccalaureate certification programs.

Most departments offering education degree programs have established advisory committees and councils of inservice educators who periodically provide valuable feedback concerning curricular offerings and practices.

During the 1984-85 academic year, it was decided by the Council for Teacher Education and the Graduate Council of the College of Graduate Studies to conduct a comprehensive follow-up study of all education degree graduates, degree recipients as well as post-baccalaureate teacher certification participants on a three year cycle. It was determined that a one or two year cycle would not provide an adequate sample based upon the enrollments in graduate degree programs at Kutztown University. Previously, individual departments offering graduate degree programs conducted their own follow-up studies of graduate degree recipients and post-baccalaureate teacher certification program participants. The comprehensive study for the period 1985-88 represented the first comprehensive and systematic follow-up study employing a revised and expanded survey format and new timeline.

The basic purpose of the summary report, as in previous reports was to: (1) Ascertain the effectiveness of the graduate education degree programs and post-baccalaureate teacher certification programs at Kutztown University in Art Education, Elementary Education, Elementary School Counseling, Higher Education Counseling, Secondary Education Counseling, Library Science, Reading Specialist, Secondary Education (Biology, English, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Social Studies), Special Education (Mentally/Physically Handicapped, Visually Impaired, Speech/Language Pathology); (2) Inform all appropriate administrators and faculty of Kutztown University regarding the perceived strengths and weaknesses of our graduates as perceived by the employers of our graduates in their respective public and private schools.

Procedures and Data

A total of 433 surveys were sent to graduate degree in education recipients or post-baccalaureate teacher certification participants for the period 1985-88. A total of 162 graduates responded which represents 37 percent. Of the 162 graduates who returned the survey, 138 (85%) indicated that they were currently employed in the education field and 113 (82%) granted permission for Kutztown University to send an employer's survey to their immediate supervisor. Of the 113 surveys sent to employers, 102 were returned which represents 90 percent. All respondents (graduates and employers of graduates) were provided with a stamped self-addressed return envelope. Responses were not received for all education degree programs. In some cases there must be caution in making conclusions based on the data presented because of the small number of respondents.

Conclusions

Graduates of education degree programs along with those who successfully completed post-baccalaureate certification programs are generally very pleased with their academic experiences at Kutztown University although satisfaction varies from program to program. Graduates indicate that in considering many of the general specialized competencies listed in the survey there had been significant progress made from the time of entry into the program until completion of the formal degree or

certification program. No effort was made to separate the responses provided by successful post-baccalaureate teacher certification participants.

Kentucky Teacher Internship Program: Implications for Teacher Education Follow-up Studies

Rather than present the Morehead State University model for teacher education follow-up studies, it is more interesting to focus on a unique data gathering option available to all public and private institutions in Kentucky. This model has implications for other states and other public and private institutions involved in tracking or monitoring the success of teacher education graduates upon graduate or completion of a certification program.

The Kentucky legislature in 1984 approved plans for a comprehensive supervision, assistance, and assessment education program for beginning teachers. Through cooperation with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), institutions of higher education, and local public school districts, components were identified to provide an upgraded education plan for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The teacher testing and internship program has one specific objective: to ensure that teacher interns being inducted into their profession perform at a high level of educational excellence. The Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP) is an integral component in the Kentucky plan. KTIP is basically a research-based system of observation and evaluation designed to identify effective and ineffective teaching behaviors.

KTIP is based on the commitment to continuing progressional development of teachers through a training and support system. The internship year bridges the gap between teacher preparation programs and on-site teaching responsibilities. The goal of the program is to ensure that all teacher interns exhibit the knowledge and skills considered essential for effective teaching performance. Indirectly, KTIP provides tremendous feedback to the university or college from which the intern graduated because a teacher educator from that institution is a member of an internship committee charged with the responsibility to work closely with the first year teacher or intern.

The major objectives to achieve this goal are: (1) To establish a formal system whereby principals, resource teachers, and teacher educators assist, supervise, and assess the progress of new teachers; (2) To involve teacher educators in the classroom performance of program graduates; (3) To train school personnel and teacher educators in the use of a performance measurement system based on behaviors which research shows have a direct relation to improved pupil achievement; (4) To utilize on-site observations and other data collected by teacher internship committees; (5) To implement the use of a professional judgment model in the certification decision to be made at the end of the internship year.

KTIP consists of a full year of actual teaching in a classroom for which the teacher (intern) has complete responsibility. The internship program provides for the supervision, assistance and assessment of all teacher interns through a teacher internship committee. The KTIP or internship committee is a three person committee assigned to work with the intern. The three people are the principal of the school where the intern is teaching, a resource teacher in the school and a teacher educator. All committee members are required to participate in a performance measurement system training program. Potential internship committee members must pass both a teacher effectiveness research examination and a practical videotape testing procedure to demonstrate their ability to use the classroom observation coding instrument required by KDE. To maintain eligibility for service on an internship committee, members must participate in annual update and review sessions. All training is conducted at regional

sites by full-time KTIP program managers. At Morehead State University, the KTIP program manager reports directly to the dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

The principal is not paid for service on the internship committee. The resource teacher receives a $1,000 stipend per year and the teacher educator receives a modest honorarium and travel expenses. The teacher educator serves through the cooperation of the teacher training institution in the region. Each internship committee member is required to observe the intern at least three times with follow-up conferences. The internship committee meets regularly to discuss the intern's progress. The resource teacher is required to spend at minimum of 70 hours working with the intern during the internship year (140 days). KDE is responsible for all costs associated with KTIP. At the end of the internship year, the internship committee must decide if the intern should be recommended for certification.

KTIP provides immediate and ongoing feedback to the institution from which teacher interns graduated during the intern's first full year of teaching. When intern's accept teaching assignments beyond the institution's service region, other regional institutions are able to provide indirect feedback and appropriate data for use by the institution from which the intern graduated. KDE also provides data to the institution from which the intern graduated. At no cost to the university or college, a quality follow-up procedure has been implemented in Kentucky. It is still a relatively new process but the implications for using KTIP data in teacher education follow-up studies and assessment models are exciting.

Recommendations for Conducting Follow-up Studies

This list of recommendations is neither intended to be awe-encompassing nor is it prioritized. Overly complex follow-up surveys are impressive to read but are often only scanned or ignored by faculty. Unless faculty feel that the follow-up study summary reports are substantive and of real value, they will find little worth in seriously considering the messages interwoven in the data or outlined in the conclusion sections. Follow-up surveys represent only one dimension of a comprehensive teacher education program assessment model. Teacher educators relying solely on the results of follow-up surveys to justify program assessment and evaluation must reconsider and look at other ways of gathering data and determining where change is warranted.

1. Follow-up studies should involve a variety of data gathering activities and not merely rely on the results of follow-up surveys and questionnaires sent to teacher education graduates and/or their immediate supervisors.

2. Surveys should be developed with input from all appropriate faculty. The goals and objectives of the teacher education program should be assessed and incorporated in the basic design on the instrument(s).

3. Surveys administered to superintendents, principals and others in basic education concerning the performance of recent graduates and/or the quality of the teacher education certification or degree program serve as valuable public relations tools. Results of follow-up studies should be shared in some appropriate manner with both internal and external constitutencies.

4. Reports resulting from follow-up studies should be distributed widely and should serve as the basis for ongoing discussion related to changes in teacher education curricula, clinical/field experience programs and student teaching practicums.

5. If teacher education is really an institution-wide endeavor and mission, then the results of follow-up studies should be shared in some appropriate way with the entire university or college community.

6. Records should be maintained in cases where changes in the teacher education program were made as a result of data and conclusions gathered through follow-up studies. Documentation that something is being done as a result of the follow-up studies is important.

7. Surveys and questionnaires should provide the respondents with the opportunity of expressing subjective reactions as well as objective responses. Respondents generally like having a chance to "personalize" a survey.

8. Prepare cover letters, surveys and questionnaires in a professional style and format. Always adhere to proper research methodology and marketing "etiquette" or protocol when involved with follow-up studies.

9. Identify one campus office to serve as a clearinghouse for all teacher education follow-up studies.

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